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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Identical letters dated 14 June 2013 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Observer Mission of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I regret to inform you of the ongoing obstruction of efforts to resuscitate the Middle East peace process and the deterioration of the situation due to Israel's relentless pursuit of unlawful and destructive policies against the Palestinian people and throughout the Palestinian land. Of grave impact in this regard is the illegitimate settlement campaign by which Israel, the occupying Power, continues to forcibly establish the facts in relation to the territory of the State of Palestine, including in East Jerusalem, with the deliberate intent of altering the demography and the physical situation on the ground in order to prejudge a final solution to the conflict.

This illegal campaign — involving, inter alia, settlement and wall construction, land confiscations, home demolitions, displacement of more Palestinian civilians and exploitation of natural resources, as well as blatant permissiveness and support for the lawlessness and terror of the Israeli settlers it has illegally transferred — continues unabated, even during this period of intense international engagement in the search for peace. As such, Israel continues to impose physical conditions on, and obstacles to, the resumption of direct peace negotiations.

Indeed, although Israel proclaims readiness to return to negotiations "at any time", there is a clear proviso. This readiness is based primarily on the condition that it can simultaneously carry out its settlement activities all over the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in breach of international law and in total contradiction of the objectives of the negotiations. In the midst of all the distortions and diversions, we must here recall that those objectives are to achieve lasting peace and security on the basis of the two-State solution by bringing a definitive end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and by resolving all final status issues, including a just solution for the Palestine refugees based on General Assembly resolution 194 (III). None of Israel's actions are consistent with these

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long-overdue objectives, nor are they conducive to creating the appropriate environment for their realization.

In this regard, I draw your attention to a recent report by an Israeli organization monitoring settlement activities, Peace Now, which reveals a dramatic rise of more than 350 per cent in Israeli settlement construction in the first three months of 2013, as compared to the same period in 2012. This fact alone is a reflection of Israel's true intentions vis-à-vis the peace process in general and the rights of the Palestinian people in particular, including their right to self-determination and freedom. Rather than acting to end its 46-year military occupation, Israel is blatantly entrenching its control over the land and its domination of the Palestinian people.

Recent reports reveal that the Israeli Government is forging ahead with plans for the construction of hundreds more settlement units in the current period. This includes a decision by the Israeli Supreme Court, on 5 June, to allow for the construction of 700 units in the illegal settlement of "Alei Zahav". On 6 June, it was also revealed that plans have been approved for the construction of a new highway interchange aimed at connecting illegal settlements in Occupied East Jerusalem with the illegal settlement of "Ma'ale Adumim" in the centre of the Territory. This interchange is located in the "E1" area and would facilitate Israel's attempts to colonize that area. Then, on 12 June, reports emerged that plans are proceeding for the building of 538 units in the illegal settlement of "Itamar", an isolated settlement near Nablus, thus enlarging the settlement fivefold, as well as for the construction of 550 units in the illegal settlement of "Bruchin", which began as a so-called "outpost".

Further aggravating the situation are the provocative statements by Israeli officials, including the Deputy Defence Minister, who in recent media comments stated that "there will never be a Palestinian State" and suggested Jordan as an alternative. We condemn and reject all such provocations, including those committed on a daily basis by Israel's extremist settlers, and illegal Israeli actions, which belie Israel's professed commitment to the two-State solution, revealing instead the true nature and intentions of the current Government, and undermine the serious peace efforts of United States Secretary of State John Kerry and regional and international partners.

In contrast, the Palestinian leadership's commitment to a just, lasting and comprehensive peace by which the State of Palestine and Israel can live side by side in peace and security on the basis of the 4 June 1967 borders is unquestionable. We thus reiterate our appeal to the international community, including the Security Council, to act with urgency to uphold the law, to safeguard the rights of the Palestinian people and to salvage the waning hopes for peace.

The international community must firmly reject Israel's empty, offensive pretexts and be resolute in demanding a halt to all illegal Israeli practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. This must include an end to the settlement campaign, which is gravely diminishing the viability of the two-State solution and sabotaging the hopes for meaningful peace negotiations to be resumed in order to bring an end to this tragic conflict. To remain permissive of settlement activities, regardless of their manifestation, is to allow for the trampling of international law and the destruction of the two-State solution, with far-reaching consequences for the prospects for Palestinian-Israeli peace as well as for the region and our global community.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 467 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 31 May 2013 (A/ES-10/595-S/2013/328), constitute a basic record of the crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Feda **Abdelhady-Nasser**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.